

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

RIO PUERCO FIELD OFFICE

2008 AVIATION PLAN



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Rio Puerco Bureau of Land Management
2008 Aviation Plan
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I. OBJECTIVE

The intent of this plan is to provide the aviation participants of Albuquerque Field Office with comprehensive guidelines for safe, effective, and cost efficient use of aircraft. This plan provides guidance in the implementation of National policy and establishes Rio Puerco BLM Field Office policies and procedures. This plan clarifies, and is not meant to duplicate policies or information readily available in other manuals, handbooks and guides except where it pertains to local procedures. Fire management will be the primary use for aviation assets on wildland fire and prescribed fire operations. Fire aviation activities include detection, suppression, and aerial ignition. This Aviation Plan for Rio Puerco Bureau of Land Management is reviewed and updated annually.

II. POLICY

All BLM aviation operations within the States of New Mexico/Oklahoma/Texas/Kansas will be conducted efficiently and safely. This will be achieved through utilization of structured aviation management practices. Key components of aviation safety include proactive hazard identification, application of risk management techniques, and an active accident prevention program. The New Mexico State Office (NMSO) and Field Offices will not supplement National aviation policy with more restrictive local policies.

III. GUIDANCE

Each Field Office has a Unit Aviation Manager who is knowledgeable in the field of aviation management and will provide guidance and assistance in all aviation matters for employees. A Field Office may share a “zoned” Unit Aviation Manager position with neighboring Field Offices or within a District.

The following is a list of documents containing guidance and regulations needed to conduct safe and efficient aviation operations. While this is not a comprehensive list, these publications are directly applicable to the New Mexico BLM aviation program. Field Offices are encouraged to maintain a library of these documents for use by their employees. Most of these documents are also available on the Internet, at either www.nbc.gov/amd or www.fire.blm.gov/aviation.

- A. Department of Interior Manual, DM 350 – 354 “Aviation Policy”
- B. Bureau Manual 9400 Series “Aviation Management”
- C. DOI-AM Operational Procedures Memorandums (OPM)
- D. BLM, 2008 National Aviation Plan
- E. BLM, 2008 New Mexico State Aviation Plan
- F. Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide
- G. Interagency Airspace Coordination Guide

- H. Interagency Airtanker Base Operations Guide
- I. Interagency HeliRappel Operations Guide
- J. Interagency Aerial Ignition Guide
- K. Interagency Single Engine Air Tanker Operations Guide
- L. Southwest Area Interagency Single Engine Air Tanker Operating Plan
- M. Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR)
- N. BLM Safety & Health for Field Operations Handbook 1112-2
- O. Aviation Life Support Equipment Handbook
- P. Aviation Transport of Hazardous Materials Handbook
- Q. DOI Field Reference Guide for Aviation Users
- R. Interagency Aviation Training Guide
- S. Interagency Aerial Supervision Guide
- T. Interagency Smoke Jumper Pilots Operations Guide

IV. RESPONSIBILITY

A. Albuquerque Field Office Aviation & Fire Manager

The Aviation Manager coordinates the Field Office aviation program and provides staff assistance on all aviation matters within the Field Office. The Unit Aviation Manager position can be shared among Field Offices, if the managers determine that efficiency and safety will not be reduced.

Field Office Managers are responsible for approving Project Aviation Safety Plans for Special

Use Activities conducted by their Field Offices. Field Offices are required to maintain unit aviation plans which implement National and State policy, as per BLM Manual 9400.33.E.

B. All Employees

Employees responsible for ensuring aviation activities are conducted safely, according to policy, and within the scope of their employment. Every employee should take steps to halt any aviation operations that are unsafe. Every employee observing an unsafe aviation activity is required to report it.

All employees have the option of not participating as an aircraft passenger if they feel the flight would be unsafe or if flying makes them uncomfortable.

Some private life insurance policies are invalid when the insured is a passenger on non-airline flights. An employee is not required to fly on Government aircraft if this applies to his/her life insurance policy.

V. AVIATION ORGANIZATION

A. Albuquerque Field Office Manager: Ed Singleton, District Manager

The Field Office Manager is responsible for the overall charter aviation management program in the Field Office. Appoints an Aviation Manager supervises aviation operations delegated to the Aviation Manager.

B. Unit Aviation Manager: Todd Richards, Fire Management Officer

The Unit Aviation manager is responsible for the following duties:

- Provides sources of guidance and should be involved in all phases of planning and conducting aircraft use.
- Coordinate aviation safety training for Field Office personnel.
- Annually maintains Field Office Aviation Mishap Response Guide and Known Aerial Hazard Maps.
- Provides over site and assistance to all aviation operations.
- Ensures that airspace coordination and deconfliction takes place for fire aviation operations and non-fire aviation projects.
- Assure that vendors and cooperators are provided a thorough orientation to mission requirements, standards, and procedures. This includes meeting with pilots and aircraft users to assure proper briefings.
- Should be aware of resource program needs, assess feasibility of aircraft use, and advise users of options available. Must recommend against the use of aircraft if risks are unacceptable, if aircraft operations would be inefficient, or if aircraft operations would violate established procedures.
- Need to be familiar with Departmental and BLM Manual guidance and policies.

C. Albuquerque Interagency Dispatch Center

Albuquerque Interagency Dispatch Center is located in the Cibola National Forest's Supervisor's Office. Employees from the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Bureau of Indian Affairs, staff the dispatch center. Personnel from other agencies may augment the dispatch staff during extreme fire season activities. All requests for aircraft and flights will be coordinated through dispatch.

D. Dispatch Center Manager: Vacant

The Center Manager is responsible for the supervision of aviation support operations and the performance of the aviation dispatchers in the dispatch center. Responsible to notify the field office duty officer of any aviation operations inflicted within BLM jurisdiction, or activity involving the Bureau's aviation resources.

E. Rio Puerco BLM Aviation Dispatcher: Stephaine Medina, BLM Dispatcher

All persons used as aircraft dispatchers will be adequately trained for the duties they perform. Appendix 1 of DOI-AMOPM No. 06-04 lists the training required by DOI for Aviation Dispatchers. Aviation Dispatcher/s responsibilities are as followed:

- Has knowledge of using aviation dispatch programs, primarily AFF, NOTAM, and ROSS.
- Has knowledge and able to reference any of aviation documents (A thru T) listed above under
- Initiate Flight follow procedures for contract/government aircraft in obedience with the Flight Follow procedures are outlined in the 2008 South West Mob Guide.
- Maintain the Aviation Incident/Accident Response Guide, Aviation Hazard Maps, and AP1B charts for the Dispatch Center.
- Must be able to reference and use the Aviation Incident/Accident Response Guide, Aviation Hazard Maps, and AP1B charts.
- Upon request will deconflict air space and military airspace for wildland and prescribed fire operations by either initiating a Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) or coordinating deconfliction by NOTAM with the Albuquerque Flight Tower and military.
- Albuquerque Dispatch Center may assign a qualified aircraft dispatcher to assume the BLM Aviation Dispatcher aviation duties.

F. Flight Managers

Each flight or aviation project will have a designated Flight Manager, whether the flight operation is control by the BLM or another agency. This position is also known as the Aircraft Chief of Party. Responsibilities are listed below.

- The Flight Manager is given primary responsibility to see that the flight or project is conducted safely and efficiently.
- Must ensure that a briefing of the flight objectives has been completed before and understood
- The Flight Manager ensures that regulatory and administrative procedures are followed properly.
- Flight Managers are required to have specific training depending on the aircraft used and mission. Training requirements are found in DOI-AM OPM No. 06-04.
- Are required to check DOI-Aviation Management issued pilot qualifications cards, aircraft data cards, or other administrative approval documents prior to the start of a project. Failure by the pilot or vendor to produce proper documentation will result in immediate cessation of operations until qualifications are determined.
- Are required to maintain currency in the training required for the aviation activities they are involved in.
- The Flight Manager is required to stop unsafe operations.

VI. PROCUREMENT AND PAYMENT PROCEDURES

A. Requests for Services and Procurement

Requests for aircraft charter/rental services for Rio Puerco Field Office projects will be coordinated by the Unit Aviation Manager.

B. Payment

Payment for aircraft use will be submitted via the Aircraft Use Report (Form AMD-23, formerly Form OAS-23). Vendors have the option of billing via their own invoice. In this case, the Form AMD-23 should be completed and submitted with the invoice to document services received and to document flight hours for statistical purposes. The Unit Aviation Manager will process payment documents for aircraft used by the Rio Puerco Field Office. Form OAS-23 shall be processed within 3 working days in order to avoid late payment penalty charges.

1. Distribution of Form AMD-23 will be made as follows:
 - a. White (original) Copy - DOI-Aviation Management
 - b. Blue Copy - Vendor Copy (Vendor usually keeps)
 - c. Yellow Copy - Ordering Office Copy

2. Billee Codes are assigned as follows:

Billee Code Ordering Office
6360 New Mexico State Office
6910 New Mexico State Office
6880 Albuquerque District Office
6550 Las Cruces District Office
6760 Roswell District Office
61E0 Farmington District Office
61K0 Oklahoma Field Office
61N0 Taos Field Office
61P0 Socorro Field Office
61R0 Carlsbad Field Office
61H0 Amarillo Field Office

3. Detailed information on completing Form AMD-23 can be obtained from the NMSO or Field Office Aviation Managers or the DOI-Aviation Management Web site www.nbc.gov/amd.

C. Non-Revenue Flights

In addition to use as a payment document, Form AMD-23 is used to document BLM use of aircraft which we do not pay for. An example is BLM Law Enforcement use of a National Guard helicopter. Form AMD-23 should be completed with the charge codes omitted. The remarks section of the form should contain the note "Nonrevenue flight—for documentation only." This does not apply to the use of United States Forest Service (USFS) aircraft for fire suppression or for projects under the operational control of a cooperating agency.

VII. TRAINING.

A. General

The Rio Puerco Field Office Aviation manager is responsible for providing Aviation Safety Training for Field Office Personnel.

B. Training Courses

The DOI-AM OPM No. 06-04 outlines Departmental requirements for aviation training for non-fire aircraft use. This OPM contains a matrix outlining the minimum initial aviation training required for each position in the aviation program. The BLM requires the initial aviation safety training modules for aircrew members (A-101, A-105, A-106, A-108, and A-113) to be conducted in a classroom setting. After that, the 3-year refresher requirements for these positions can be met through computer-based training accessible at www.iat.gov.

Training and qualification requirements for aviation positions in wildland fire operations, including prescribed fires, are contained in PMS 310-1, Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualifications System Guide. Numerous other training courses exist which are beneficial for increasing the safety and efficiency of aviation programs. The Unit Aviation Manager can assist in developing training plans to ensure that employees are properly trained for the duties they perform.

VII. LAW ENFORCEMENT.

A. Rio Puerco Field Office Law Enforcement Officers

1. John Hawkos, Rio Puerco LEO
2. Marcia Menz, Cuba Area LEO
3. Eric Richardson, Grants Area LEO

B. General

The BLM Law Enforcement personnel often operate/cooperate with other agencies in performing missions. This may involve the use of State, local, military and other Federal aircraft. In some cases, the nature of law enforcement activities requires aviation procedures that differ from non-law enforcement operations. However, to the extent possible, BLM Law Enforcement personnel will follow all established safety practices and procedures when involved in aviation operations. This includes mission planning, supervisory approvals, training, personal protective equipment (PPE), and flight following. The BLM Law Enforcement personnel will not ride in aircraft operated by other agencies, unless their use of the aircraft is authorized by DOI-Aviation Management.

C. Agreements

The DOI has existing Drug Law Enforcement Memorandums of Understanding

1. (MOUs) with the following agencies:
2. Drug Enforcement Administration
3. U.S. Border Patrol
4. U.S. Coast Guard
5. U.S. Customs Service

6. Department of Defense
7. National Guard in the State of New Mexico and adjacent States

The BLM Law Enforcement personnel may be passengers on aircraft operated by these agencies as long as the terms of the individual MOUs are adhered to.

D. Notifications

Confidentiality is occasionally a concern with law enforcement operations. However, the supervisors of Law Enforcement personnel, as well the NMSO Law Enforcement Office, must be informed whenever employees will be involved in law enforcement aviation missions.

VIII. MILITARY AND NATIONALGUARD AIRCRAFT

A. General Use

Military and National Guard aircraft will not be used as an alternative to rental or contract aircraft in order to save BLM funds. Military aircraft can be used in emergencies. Military aircraft and National Guard aircraft can be used in special circumstances, primarily limited to projects in which BLM and the military cooperate and gain mutual benefits.

B. DOI MOUs

The DOI Aviation Management has established several MOUs for DOI use of military and other agency aircraft in law enforcement missions (See section VIII.C.). These MOUs cannot be used to obtain military aircraft for non-law enforcement work or for work outside the scope of the MOU.

C. Non-Law Enforcement Use

Use of military or National Guard aircraft and pilots outside the scope of the existing DOI MOUs will be coordinated through the SAM and approved by the State Director. Two week's time will be needed to obtain Departmental approval.

D. Documentation of Use

All use of military aircraft will be documented on Form OAS-23 as non-revenue flights.

IX. OTHER AGENCY AND NONCARDED AIRCRAFT AND PILOTS

A. General Use

The use of other agency aircraft and pilots, or privately operated aircraft will be coordinated through the SAM. Local, State, and non-DOI agencies frequently have less stringent standards than DOI. Therefore, DOI Aviation Management must give approval prior to using these aircraft and pilots. Two week's time will be needed to check pilot and aircraft qualifications and to obtain DOI Aviation Management approval.

B. Civil Air Patrol

The Civil Air Patrol (CAP) is a federally chartered corporation, and functions as a volunteer auxiliary of the United States Air Force. A previous MOU between the CAP and the DOI has been cancelled. The BLM can no longer use CAP aircraft or pilots to conduct BLM missions.

C. USFS Carded Aircraft and Pilots

USFS carded aircraft and pilots must meet DOI requirements so that BLM employees can fly as passengers or air crew members. However, BLM cannot pay the USFS for aircraft use unless reimbursement agreements are in place. The BLM does utilize USFS contracted aircraft for wildfire suppression operations. Since wildfire suppression costs are not reimbursed among the

Federal wildland fire management agencies, the USFS uses the fire code for the wildfire, and pays for the aircraft use with USFS their fire suppression funds.

D. New Mexico State Forestry

The New Mexico State Forestry Division has recently entered into an agreement with Aviation Management Directorate (AMD) which allows the State to utilize AMD's On Call contracts and Aircraft Rental Agreements. Aircraft procured by New Mexico State Forestry Division through AMD can be utilized by BLM. Payment for these aircraft will be through the Form AMD-23 by using the BLM office's Billee code and the appropriate charge code for BLM's share of the aircraft use.

E. Reimbursement

If BLM will be reimbursing other agencies for use of their aircraft, an Interagency Agreement must be completed and approved prior to the flight. Otherwise, BLM cannot pay for the services.

F. Documentation of Use

All use of non-DOI aircraft will be documented on form OAS-23, whether or not reimbursement takes place. An exception is the use of USFS aircraft for wildfire suppression.

G. End Product Contract Aircraft

An "end product contract" is a contract in which the Government requires the delivery of goods or services without specifying the delivery method. The BLM does not exercise operational control over the aircraft in these contracts and provides few, if any, specifications for the type of aircraft or aircraft performance.

Two examples of end product contracts used by BLM are:

1. An aerial photography contract, in which BLM pays to receive photographs, and
2. An herbicide application project, in which BLM pays for an area of land treated.

Recent court cases and National Transportation Safety Board decisions have placed increased responsibility on the Government for accidents involving end product contract aircraft. It is important that BLM clearly distinguishes which procurements are for end products and which procurements are for flight services. Information on our current requirements for end product contracts can be found in DOI-AM OPM No. 06-35.

End product contracts involving aircraft should be reviewed by the SAM to ensure that BLM is not assuming operational control over aircraft involved in these contracts.

Aircraft involved in end product contracts are not approved or carded by DOI Aviation Management. They are required to adhere to all applicable Federal Aviation Regulations pertaining to civil aircraft.

X. AIRCRAFT SECURITY

Aircraft users and aviation managers should be proactive in protecting aircraft we use. This could include parking aircraft in secure areas of an airport, providing aircraft parking areas with adequate tie-down capabilities, and/or providing hangar space when needed. Concern for aircraft security should include potential weather damage, animal damage, and other factors. The BLM owned, contracted, or rented aircrafts are highly visible to the public and, therefore, are potential targets of vandalism or sabotage. Aircraft users should be familiar with Chapter 10 of the BLM National Aviation Plan, which addresses aviation security.

XI. SPECIAL USE

A. General.

"Special Use Activities" are aircraft missions requiring special considerations due to increased risk involved in that mission. This may require specific aircraft equipment, deviation from normal operating practices, special pilot skills and techniques, or PPE. Since Special Use Activities involve a higher level of risk, specialized training and detailed planning are required.

1. Special Use Activities must be approved by the Field Office Manager or the State Director.
2. A Project Aviation Safety Plan must be completed. (See Appendix B for a suggested outline of Project Aviation Safety Plan requirements.) One-time Special Use Activities may complete the one page "Hazard Analysis and Dispatch/Aviation Manager Checklist" form for this purpose. An example of this form is in the Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide, page 3-24. Also, some Special Use Activities, such as aerial ignition, have prepared formats for Project Aviation Safety Plans (See the Interagency Aerial Ignition Guide).
3. Field Offices utilizing aircraft for fire suppression operations should maintain a Fire Aviation Safety Plan.
4. Special Use Activities have stringent flight following requirements, typically a 15- to 60 minute check-in via radio, or use of the Automated Flight Following system (AFF), if the aircraft is properly equipped.
5. Special Use Activities have PPE requirements specific to that particular mission.
6. Special Use Activities require that the pilot and aircraft are approved by DOI-Aviation Management for that specific activity.
7. The BLM Volunteers shall not participate in Special Use Activities, since these missions are considered hazardous duty.
8. Employees engaged in Special Use Activities must meet the training requirements outlined in 352 DM 1, and DOI-AM OPM No. 06-04.
9. Only air crew members and passengers essential to the mission may be on board Special Use Flights.

B. Examples of Special Use

A listing of Special Use Activities is contained in DOI-AM OPM No. 06-29. The following are examples of Special Use Activities that are typically conducted by New Mexico BLM:

1. Low level flights, which are defined as flights conducted within 500' of the surface. (See Low Level Operations Guide.)
2. Water or retardant application for wildland firefighting.
3. Air Tactical Group Supervisor, Helicopter Coordinator, or Airtanker Coordinator operations.
4. Aerial ignition activities for prescribed burning or wildland fire suppression. (See the Interagency Aerial Ignition Guide.)
5. Changes to the aircraft that invalidate the aircraft's standard airworthiness certificate. An example would be radio tracking of wildlife with an external antenna mounted on the aircraft.
6. Transport of external loads.
7. Takeoff or landing requiring special techniques due to hazardous terrain, obstacles, pinnacles, or surface conditions.
8. Mountain flying in helicopters.

XII. AVIATION LIFE SUPPORT EQUIPMENT

A. BLM Employees.

All BLM employees will wear the PPE required for the specific flight. (See 351 DM 1 Aviation Life Support Equipment Handbook.) This includes flights on BLM aircraft as well as aircraft owned or controlled by other agencies.

B. Non-BLM Employees.

Non-BLM passengers flying on BLM aircraft will utilize all PPE required of BLM passengers on that flight.

APPENDIX A: EXAMPLE OF A PILOT/PASSENGER BRIEFING

Prior to flight, the pilot-in-command shall ensure that all passengers have been briefed on:

A. Procedures.

1. Entry and exit.
2. Emergency actions.

B. Location and use of:

1. Seat belts and shoulder harnesses.
2. Emergency exits.
3. Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT).
4. Aviation Life Support Equipment (ALSE).
5. Oxygen equipment, if applicable.
6. First aid kit.
7. Fire extinguishers.
8. Fuel shut-off.
9. Battery switch.
10. Smoking restrictions.

APPENDIX B: RECOMMENDED ELEMENTS OF A PROJECT AVIATION SAFETY PLAN

Each Special Use Mission will have a Project Aviation Safety Plan completed. One-time, noncomplex Special Use Missions may utilize the “Hazard Analysis and Dispatch/Aviation Manager Checklist” Form for this purpose. A written Project Aviation Safety Plan will consist of the following:

1. Flight Manager. Identify a qualified Flight Manager to oversee the project.
2. Project Name and Objectives. Brief description of the project and its objectives.
3. Justification. Indicate why the project will require the use of aircraft in Special Use Flight conditions/environments and list any practical alternatives for completion of the project.
4. Project Dates. Dates project will begin and end. These may be approximate.
5. Location. Enter descriptive location and include a map clearly showing area where flights will be made; known aerial hazards must be clearly indicated (see 11. below).
6. Projected cost of Aviation Resources. Enter cost coding, projected flight hours and cost, projected miscellaneous expenses (overnight charges, service truck mileage, etc.), and total estimated cost of project.
7. Aircraft. Identify company that owns the aircraft to be used, registration number, aircraft type, and missions for which aircraft is approved.
8. Pilot. If known, identify pilot(s), and the missions they are qualified for.
9. Participants. List individuals involved in flights, their qualifications (Flight Manager, passenger, etc.), and include individuals' project responsibilities. Also, include names of any non-BLM passengers.
10. Flight Following and Emergency Search and Rescue. Dispatcher or Unit Aviation Manager identifies check-in procedures, including time/locations, dispatch office involved, individuals responsible for flight following, frequencies to be used, and any special circumstances (Memorandum of Agreements, Military Travel Routes, etc.). When local (on-site) flight following is approved, ground personnel must have contact with dispatch to allow timely reporting of any accidents, incidents, hazards, or problems encountered.

11. Aerial Hazard Analysis. The Flight Manager and the Unit Aviation Manager or Dispatcher will jointly develop a Known Aerial Hazard map. Flights made in confined areas, such as in canyons, require a prior ground and/or aerial survey of hazards. Other hazards to consider are listed on the "Hazard Analysis and Dispatch/Aviation Manager Checklist" form. A copy of the Known Aerial Hazard Map will be provided to the pilot prior to any project flights. Other two coordination which may be required includes establishing Temporary Flight Restrictions on wildfires and deconfliction of Special Use Airspace with military authorities.

12. Aviation Life Support Equipment/Personal Protective Equipment. Identify the equipment necessary for the particular operation.

13. Load Calculations and Weight-and-Balance. The pilot is responsible for the accurate completion of load calculations (helicopters) and weight-and-balance (all aircraft). Unit Aviation Managers shall ensure that aircrafts chosen are capable of performing the mission(s) safely. For helicopter flights, a load calculation showing expected conditions of altitude, temperature, and weight shall be included in the Plan. The Flight Manager will ensure that passenger manifests and load calculations are completed.

